

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-09

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R 210043 Z APR 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

INFO SECDEF

NAVELECSYSCOMHQ WASHINGTON D. C.

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 075343

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, AS

SUBJECT: OMEGA AUSTRALIA

REF: A. CANBERRA 1751

B. CANBERRA 1763

C. CANBERRA A-80

1. APPRECIATE EMBASSY' S REPORTING OF GAO CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED OMEGA STATION IN AUSTRALIA, AND WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY BARNARD' S ASSURANCE RE OMEGA REPORTED REF. A. WE ALSO FULLY APPRECIATE THE DIFFICULTIES THAT THE GOA IS ENCOUNTERING IN CONNECTION WITH OMEGA AND THE EFFORTS BEING MADE TO OVERCOME THEM. HOWEVER, IN ADDITION TO SERIOUS SIGNAL COVERAGE PROBLEM CREATED BY DELAY IN COMPLETING CONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRALIAN PORTION OF WORLDWIDE OMEGA NAVIGATION SYSTEM OUTLINED IN PARA 8, WE BELIEVE EMBASSY AND GOA SHOULD BE AWARE OF FUNDING PROBLEM WHICH WILL ARISE IF GOA APPROVAL OF OMEGA POSTPONED INTO SUMMER OF 1973.

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2; NAVY ADVISES THAT PROGRAMMED FUNDS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF OMEGA AUSTRALIA STATION ARE AVAILABLE FOR OBLIGATION ONLY

UNTIL 30 JUNE 1973. IF OMEGA AGREEMENT AND CONSEQUENT AGENCY- TO- AGENCY CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT ARE NOT SIGNED PRIOR TO THAT DATE, IT IS PROBABLE THAT US OFFER TO PROVIDE FUNDS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF OMEGA AUSTRALIA STATION WILL HAVE TO BE WITHDRAWN DUE TO PRESSING FISCAL CONSTRAINTS ON NAVY EXPENDITURES.

3. NAVY OMEGA PROJECT OFFICE HAS SOUGHT TO AVERT THIS BY ATTEMPTING COORDINATE PRELIMINARY CONTRACTUAL DETAILS OF STATION CONSTRUCTION WITH AUSTRALIAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORT. HOWEVER, LITTLE OR NO PROGRESS HAS BEEN REALIZED TO DATE.

4. IF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT UNDER PROPOSED OMEGA AGREEMENT CANNOT BE SIGNED BY 30 JUNE 1973, ONLY FUNDING ALTERNATIVES WOULD BE TO:

A. ATTEMPT REPROGRAMMING OF FY-74 FUNDS ALREADY SPECIFICALLY ALLOCATED TO OTHER PROJECTS (A DIFFICULT PROCESS INVOLVING MONTHS, WITH UNCERTAIN CHANCE OF APPROVAL).

B. INCLUDE OMEGA AUSTRALIA FUNDS IN FY-75 BUDGET SUBMISSION TO CONGRESS (WHICH WOULD TAKE PLACE IN FALL OF 73, WITH FUNDS, IF APPROVED, NOT AVAILABLE UNTIL COURSE OF FY-75, I. E. AFTER 1 JUL 74).

5. UNFORTUNATELY, NEITHER ALTERNATIVE IS CERTAIN TO PRODUCE NEW FUNDING. ADDITIONAL DELAY RESULTING FROM EITHER ALTERNATIVE COULD UNACCEPTABLY JEOPARDIZE FULFILLMENT OF FIRM SCHEDULE SET FOR OPERATION OF WORLDWIDE OMEGA SYSTEM. THEREFORE, IF CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT CANNOT BE SIGNED BY END FY 73, WE WILL LIKELY HAVE TO PROPOSE REVISION UNDER WHICH USG WOULD BE ABLE TO PROVIDE OMEGA ELECTRONICS ONLY (AS IN AGREEMENT WITH JAPAN), WITH NO OTHER FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION. PROVISION OF ELECTRONICS WOULD NOT DEPEND ON CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS.

6. SHOULD SUITABLE OPPORTUNITY PRESENT ITSELF, EMBASSY SHOULD AT ITS DISCRETION CONVEY FOREGOING TO APPROPRIATE GOA AUTHORITIES. EMBASSY SHOULD MAKE IT PLAIN THAT THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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POSSIBLE LIMITATION OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE OMEGA AUSTRALIA STATION IN NO WAY IS INTENDED, AND SHOULD NOT BE REGARDED, AS THREAT BY WHICH TO PUSH GOA INTO ACCEPTANCE OF OMEGA AGREEMENT, BUT RATHER AS SOBER EXPLANATION OF THE FISCAL REALITIES WHICH UNDERLIE US CONCERN OVER EXTENDED DELAY IN GOA CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSED OMEGA AGREEMENT. FYI. WE APPRECIATE THAT INFO CONTAINED HEREIN RUNS CHANCE OF BEING COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, BUT BELIEVE THAT NOT ALERTING GOA TO IMMINENCE OF FUNDING DIFFICULTIES WOULD BE IRRESPONSIBLE. END FYI.

7. EMBASSY MAY ALSO WISH TO PROVIDE GOA WITH BACKGROUND ON PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE THUS FAR IN ESTABLISHING OMEGA SYSTEM, AND IMPLICATIONS FOR AUSTRALIA OF DELAY IN CONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRALIAN STATION AS OUTLINED IN FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS:

8. A PROLONGED DELAY IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRALIAN OMEGA STATION WOULD DEPRIVE MAJORITY OF THE AUSTRALIAN LITTORAL AND ADJACENT WATERS, AS WELL AS EASTERN INDIAN OCEAN SOUTHWARDS INCLUDING ANTRACTICA, OF OMEGA COVERAGE UNTIL THE AUSTRALIAN STATION COULD BECOME OPERATIONAL, SINCE THE LINE OF POSITION WHICH WOULD BE PROVIDED IN THAT AREA BY THE OMEGA SYSTEM WITHOUT AN AUSTRALIAN STATION IS INSUFFICIENT TO PROVIDE A NAVIGATIONAL FIX. SOUTHEAST PORTION OF AUSTRALIA AND ITS ADJACENT WATERS, INCLUDING TASMAN SEA (AND ALSO NEW ZEALAND AND VICINITY) WOULD BE COVERED BY THE OMEGA SYSTEM, ONCE IT BECOMES FULLY OPERATIONAL THROUGH INTER- SECTION OF LINES OF POSITION FROM LA REUNION, JAPAN AND ARGENTINE STATIONS. AREA AROUND AUSTRALIA AND IN INDIAN OCEAN AND ANTARCTICA DESCRIBED ABOVE WOULD CONSTITUTE ONLY GAP IN OMEGA' S WORLDWIDE COVERAGE. THIS GAP WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT AUSTRALIA' S EXPANDING MARITIME AND CIVIL AIR INTERESTS BY LARGELY DENYING THEM THE BENEFITS OF THE BEST WORLDWIDE NAVIGATIONAL AID SYSTEM YET DEVELOPED. PRESUMABLY CIVIL AIRCRAFT FLYING TO AUSTRALIA AND COMMERICAL SHIPS OPERATING IN VICINITY OF AUSTRALIA WOULD HAVE TO BE EQUIPPED WITH REDUNDANT NAVIGATION SYSTEM, WITH CONSEQUENT UNNECESSARY EXPENSE, IF OMEGA AGREEMENT WITH AUSTRALIA NOT SIGNED ON SCHEDULE. COVERAGE IN AREAS OF PRIMARY INTEREST TO U. S. WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED.

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9. IF CONSTRUCTION OF AUSTRALIAN STATION CAN BE BEGUN BY SUMMER 1973, STATION COULD BE ON AIR BY SUMMER OF 1975. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF AUSTRALIA, THE OMEGA SYSTEM IS PRESENTLY SCHEDULED TO BECOME FULLY OPERATIONAL IN DECEMBER 1974. INDIVIDUAL STATIONS ARE EXPECTED TO GO ON THE AIR AS FOLLOWS: JAPAN, JANUARY 1974; LA REUNION, DECEMBER 1974; ARGENTINA, DECEMBER 1974; AND LIBERIA, DECEMBER 1974. NORWAY, TRINIDAD, NORTH DAKOTA, AND HAWAII ARE ALREADY OPERATIONAL (HAWAII IS TEMPORARILY OFF THE AIR UNTIL JULY 1973).

10. FYI. TRINIDAD STATION WILL BE PHASED OUT WHEN LIBERIA STATION BECOMES FULLY OPERATIONAL. WE EXPECT AN EXCHANGE OF NOTES IMPLEMENTING THE OMEGA AGREEMENT WITH LIBERIA TO BE COMPLETED DURING OR SHORTLY AFTER THE WEEK OF APRIL 23. NEGOTIATIONS WITH LIBERIA BEGAN IN JUNE 1972. (WE HAVE NOT YET INFORMED TRINIDAD OF THESE NEGO-

TIATIONS) END FYI.

11. NEGOTIATIONS WITH FRANCE HAVE BEGUN TO MOVE FORWARD AGAIN FOLLOWING A PERIOD OF EXAMINATION OF VARIOUS ALTER-

NATIVE TYPES OF ANTENNAS FOR LA REUNION. CONSEQUENTLY, WE EXPECT LA REUNION STATION TO BE COMPLETED ON SCHEDULE IN DECEMBER 1974.

12. EMBASSY CANBERRA WILL BE NOTIFIED IMMEDIATELY WHEN EITHER FRENCH OR LIBERIAN AGREEMENT IS SIGNED SO THAT GOA MAY MAKE PUBLIC USE OF THIS INFORMATION.

13. GOA MAY ALSO WISH TO UTILIZE PUBLICLY INFORMATION CONCERNING GRAN PROVIDED AS ENCLOSURE TO KELLEY- NENNO LETTER OF MARCH 8.

14. RESPONSE TO CANBERRA 2271 WILL FOLLOW. PORTER

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

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